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Scale AVIATION Modeller International

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2006
SURVEY
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50 Kits
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A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE FOR THE MODELLER

PART ELEVEN

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3 Builds

Republic P-43 Lancer
Bristol Blenheim IV
Dewoitine
D.250

Colour profiles
by Jerry Boucher



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Publisher ■ SAM Publications
Managing Editor ■ Mike Jerram
Email mike@sampublications.com
Deputy Editor ■ Gary Hatcher
Email gary@sampublications.com

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Art Director ■ Simon Sugarhood

Aviation Illustrations ■ Jerry Boucher (UK);
Michele Marsan (Italy)

Aviation Historians ■ Harry Woodman (UK)

Contributors this month

■ Steve Evans (UK) ■ David Francis (UK) ■ Tom Hall (UK)
■ Dave Hooper (UK) ■ Trevor Pask (UK)
■ Joe Sheppard (Canada) ■ Gordon Stevens (UK)
■ Stephan Wilkinson (USA)

Accessories & Decals reviews ■ David Francis (UK)

Kit Review Team this month

■ Simon Balchelor ■ Chris Busbridge ■ Mick Condra
■ Martin Dawson ■ Paul Gibson ■ David Holman
■ Dave Hooper ■ Dave Hyron ■ Chris Jenkins
■ Richard Johnson ■ Tim Large ■ Ivor Ramsden
■ Mike Williams

Advertising Manager ■ Joanna Brooks
Tel: +44 (0) 8707 333 733
Email joanna@sampublications.com

Prepress Production ■ SAM Publications

Distribution ■ Odyssey Publisher Services Ltd
7 St Andrews Way, Devons Road,
Bromley by Bow, London, E3 3PA, UK
Tel: +44 (0) 870 240 2058

North American Distribution ■ Distcor
695 Westney Rd South, Suite 14, Ajax, Ontario,
Canada L1S 6M9
Tel: +1 (905) 619 6565

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BACK TO BASICS
aircraft
A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE FOR THE MODELLER

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Photo: Mike Jerram

on the RAF's Typhoons, and I'll readily concede that, while it's hardly original, it's an improvement on the bland one-size-fits-all 'Eurofighter'.

No sign of a latter-day Spitfire yet, we may be thankful, though designer Reginald Mitchell described its hallowed title as "Just the sort of bloody silly name they would choose" when his Type 300 prototype was officially dubbed in May 1936. Alas, he was never to know in what affection that "bloody silly name" would be held.

Worse still than this unimaginative 'II' fetish is the retrospective application of current manufacturers' names to aircraft produced by the predecessors they've swallowed up. I can accept Boeing F-15s and F/A-18s and Lockheed Martin F-16s because those types are still in production by those companies, but my hackles rise when I see references to 'Boeing' DC-3s or 'BAE Systems' Tiger Moths or Mosquitoes. That sound you hear—apart from the gnashing of editorial teeth—is Sir Geoffrey de Havilland snap-rolling in his grave.

Letter USA

A welcome newcomer to our pages this month is Stephan Wilkinson, whose

Name that 'plane. Again. And again

"What's on the cover of next month's SAMI?"

Ordinarily I don't disclose such privileged information outside of the editorial office, but this was a trusted friend, so I saw no harm in letting him in on the secret of last month's main feature.

"Lightning."

"Great! The old forked-tailed devil, eh?"

"Er, no. Not the P-38. The English Electric—or British Aircraft Corporation if you really must—Lightning. The RAF's last great single-seat fighter." (So far as I'm concerned the jury's still out on the Eurofighter Typhoon.)

That little exchange got me thinking about how many times certain aircraft names have been reused. In addition to the P-38 and last month's cover star, 'Lightning' has adorned several lightplane designs, and was briefly applied—as Lightning II—to Lockheed's YF-22 prototype before it became the Lockheed Martin F/A-22 Raptor.

I don't recall any previous aeronautical use of 'Raptor' (doubtless I'll now be deluged with 'everybody knows that' examples from readers better informed than me), but for a proposed article for a motoring magazine I did once start drawing up a list of names that had been used for both aircraft and cars, and gave up on the idea when I'd exceeded 200 without opening a reference book.

Whether aeroplanes or cars, it seems



the same old names crop up time and again. Bird names that conjure images of graceful flight, aggressive predatory titles, or monikers that breath power or speed quite naturally abound. Thus there have been numerous Eagles, Falcons, Gulls, Kestrels, Swifts and Swallows, Cobras, Cougars, Panthers, Sharks and Tigers, Comets, Meteors and Rockets.

But even those have been exhausted, and for many years now the cop-out solution to naming new aircraft has been to tack a 'II' onto names from the past. Thus, in addition to Lightning II, we've had Corsair II, Thunderbolt II, Avenger II, Texan II, Harvard II, Black Widow II, though we've thankfully been spared a 'II'

fter USA will be a regular feature.

Stephan's background as a writer includes stints as senior editor of *Flying* and editor of *Car & Driver* magazines in New York, and a long stint as US correspondent for the UK magazine *Pilot*.

An old and experienced hand with both aeroplanes and cars, Stephan is a relatively recent recruit to modelling, but not to building aircraft, for he has built in 1/1 scale—a two-seat Falco, the svelte lightplane designed by Italian maestro Stelio Frati and these days marketed as a homebuilt by Alfred Scott of Virginia-based Sequoia Aircraft Corporation. Having worked with Stephan for a quarter century or more, and admired his writing style for even longer, I hope that SAMI readers also will enjoy his refreshing and sometimes irreverent (why not?) take on our hobby.

And please don't write in pointing out that the Italian Air Force paint job on his Falco (pictured here, but now with a new owner in Australia) isn't authentic, or that the Italian military never flew Falcos. Stephan knows. He just liked the scheme.

Mike Jerram

Editor, Scale Aviation Modeller International

SAMI





Jasta 5 1/48
Albatros D.V

Albatross D.V (Jasta V)

Scale: 1/48 Kit No: 1111
Status: Limited Edition Price: £19.99
Panel Lines: Engraved
Type: Injection Moulded Plastic
Parts: Plastic 60, Etched 70
Local Options: 4 Express masks included
Manufacturer: Eduard
UK Importer: Hannants



The kit's decal sheet



Instructions and painting guide



From Formula 1 to World War I

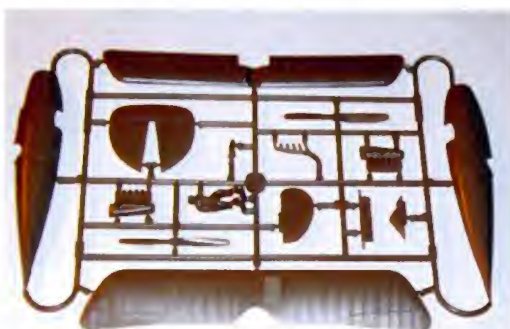
Trevor Pask finds a change of pace from Grand Prix cars in Eduard's 1/48 scale Limited Edition Albatros D.V

This kit appeared at the end of 2005, and is one of a new series of Limited Editions from Eduard. It features the usual plastic sprues, a photo-etched fret and a comprehensive set of pre-cut masks, but what marks it out from the earlier 'Profi Pack' series is a new decal sheet of aftermarket quality for four of the more colourful examples of the aircraft.

In all my years of modelling I had never previously built a WWI aircraft. I suspect that this is because the period had been long neglected when I seriously got back into the hobby about 10 years ago, and the WWI kits on offer at the time were poor. I knew about the improved quality of Eduard and Roden kits, but the impulse to try one never came until I saw this one on a trader's

stall at the Biggin Hill Air Fair last year. The large red dragon on the side of the aircraft depicted on the box art instantly appealed, and my partner remembered, so instead of the customary Formula 1 car kit at Christmas, I got this instead.

The quality is excellent. The injected components are moulded in a light tan and are flawless. The photo-etched fret and masks are up to Eduard's high





standards and the decal sheet is outstanding. Great War aircraft were small, and even in 1/48 scale the Albatros builds up into a tiny model. There is, however, a huge amount of modelling contained in this box.

Construction begins conventionally with the cockpit interior, but the myriad of photo-etched parts made this a time-consuming but rewarding process. Once the two fuselage halves were closed up I had to think almost immediately about painting and decalling half of the model before moving on.

The main airframe parts fitted well, but there was still a little sanding and filling required, especially where the lower wing fits onto the fuselage. A little rescribing of panel lines was required. At this stage I applied a coat of Halfords white plastic primer to ensure that I was happy with my work, and then attached the undercarriage. I was tempted to paint the model first, but I thought that

the undercarriage would be harder to attach later on. Attaching the undercarriage was the first really fraught part of the build. Presumably to preserve a scale appearance there are few positive attachment points for some very delicate components. A steady hand and the fine point of a cocktail stick to apply some tiny dabs of superglue were absolutely essential.

Now I began the process of masking-up and painting the main airframe and upper wing. I chose to complete the model with that striking red dragon paint artwork carried by aircraft flown by Richard Flasher of *Jagdstaffel 5* in 1917. As depicted by Eduard this scheme is a little controversial, as few photographs show the tail of the dragon. Eduard have it flowing up and onto the tailplane and transforming into a tree. I have no idea if this is accurate, but the representation is stunning and captures the spirit of the almost medieval heraldry of many German aircraft of that period.

Lots of careful masking was required. All painting was done with an airbrush using a mixture of Tamiya and Vallejo



The completed fuselage interior



The fuselage halves needed a little help when joining, the only fit problem encountered during the build



Masking up half of the completed model for painting





Painting under way

acrylics. The painting guidance given by Eduard refers only to Gunze Sangyo paints that are hard to obtain in the UK, but alternatives are available. To some it may be heresy to say this, but as all photographs from WWI are black-and-white and any surviving fabric will be long faded, no-one knows exactly what shades the colours actually were. My aim was to paint the model so that it looked like the colour illustrations supplied by Eduard and other reference sources.

A coat of Humbrol Gloss Cote prepared the main components for the decals. These behaved perfectly well and





A pre-cut mask is supplied to paint the radiator panel on the top wing

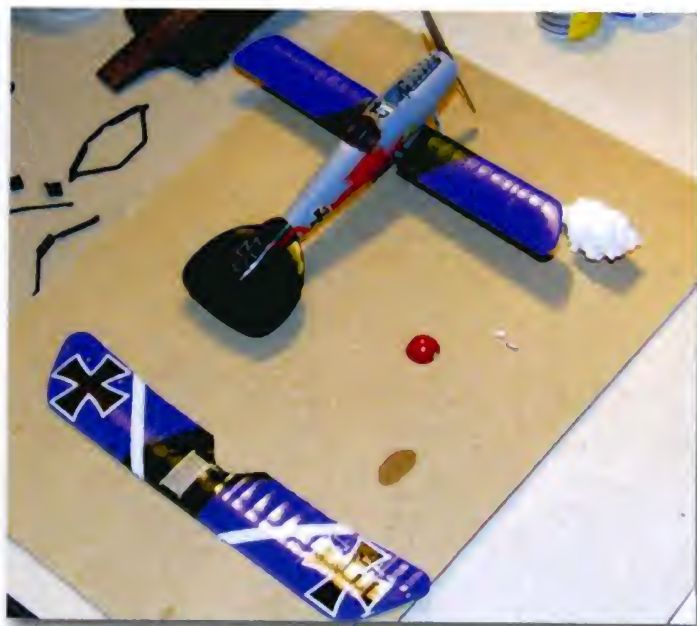
in preparation for final assembly I sealed the decals in with a layer of Matt Cote. Fortunately, I started with the upper wing, and spotted the adverse reaction caused by the clear coat before I had moved onto the fuselage. For whatever reason, the combination of paints used did not respond well to the Humbrol varnish. This had never happened to me before and the net result of the blistering mess was a ruined top wing.

Fortunately the situation was retrievable. I placed the wing in a heavy-duty plastic bag, applied oven cleaner, and a day later the paint was scrubbed off. I repainted the wing as before, but substituted decals from a useful generic sheet in the Almark range. Vallejo matt varnish sealed in everything perfectly this time, and after installing the upper

wing I airbrushed a thin coat on the rest of the model.

Painting and decalling over, it was at this point that I realised I was simply too ham-fisted or inexperienced with the genre to use all of the photo-etched elements supplied. I had run out of steam, and with so much invested in the project I wanted to see it finished, not ruined by 'pushing the envelope', so I used the injection-moulded guns rather than the photo-etched ones and omitted several control horns from the wings.

Never having built a WWI subject before, this project gave me my first taste of rigging. With hindsight I perhaps should have approached this differently, as attaching the rigging to a completed model did not seem to be the correct way of going about things, although this seems to be an accepted approach. The



Decal application under way

material I used was thin elastic thread purchased which looks slightly overscale but has the advantage of being able to be stretched to fit when one end is firmly anchored with a drop of superglue. This is a trying process and I did not fully rig the model. At this stage I just wanted a decent result, and I quit while I was ahead!

In the late 1980s I attempted my first

Tamiya 1/20 scale F1 model after years of making aircraft and felt terribly challenged by the experience. I found modelling my first WWI aircraft a similarly challenging project that took me well out of several comfort zones, and I am a better modeller for it.

I may be back for more, but only after going back to F1 for a rest!

SAMI



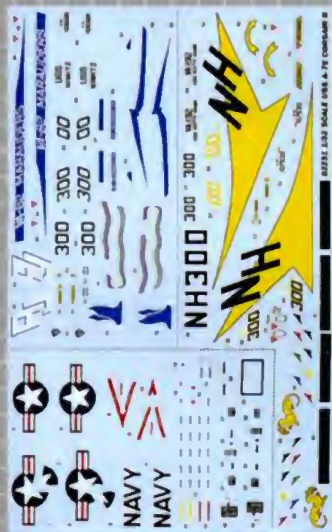
Eduard produces a nice set of figures to go with many of their 1/48 scale WWI aircraft





A-7E Corsair II

Scale: 1/32 Kit No: 02231
Price: £59.99 Panel Lines: Recessed
Status: New Tooling
Type: Injection Moulded Plastic
Parts: Plastic 555, Clear 26, Rubber 4,
Metal 7, Etched 27
Decal Options: 2
Manufacturer: Trumpeter
UK Importer: Pocketbond



Navy Blue Part 4

Supersize SLUF

David Francis builds Trumpeter's new 1/32 scale A-7E Corsair II

When a few years ago I decided to start a series of articles on building a selection of naval aircraft in 1/32 scale I believed that it would not be a major project. I envisaged building about eight models—all US Navy, mainly older kits from Hasegawa and a few of the newer Tamiya and Academy offerings. Then Trumpeter started producing their range of 1/32 injection-moulded models, and smaller companies like Paul Fisher and Panther

Productions added to the number with resin and vacform kits. At the last count I now have enough kits to complete at least 18 different subjects, including aircraft from the navies of Japan, Russia and British Fleet Air Arm as well as the US Navy. Time to build an extension or move house!

The subject for this 'Navy Blue' is one of Trumpeter's newest kits, the A-7E Corsair II, with the addition of aftermarket parts from Eduard and Black Box. The A-7 entered service during the





Vietnam War and the last two operational squadrons were about to be decommissioned when Iraq invaded Kuwait, starting the first Gulf War, the conflict that was to be the swan song for the 'SLUF' in US Navy service. SLUF? *Short Little Ugly Fella* is the version than can be used in polite society.

The Kit

First seen in the UK at IPMS Scale Modelworld last November, this kit is typical of current Trumpeter models. The plastic features fine recessed detail, and thankfully those dreaded metal rod and brass hinges used to produce 'working' control surfaces on earlier offerings have gone. Instead, the brass fret is used to supply much more useful items such as seatbelts and chaff dispensers. The kit comes with a choice of undercarriage legs in either plastic or metal but a downside for some modellers is that the tyres are supplied in vinyl with no plastic alternatives. There is plenty of detail with a choice of extended or folded wings, a number of open avionics bays and a very nicely detailed cockpit.

I decided to wait a few months before starting construction to see what the aftermarket companies would offer. I wasn't disappointed. In short order Eduard produced no fewer than five sets of etched brass for

the Corsair II. Black Box released two cockpits for both the Navy A-7E and US Air Force 'D' variant. And finally, decal sheets have appeared from Airdoc, Twobobs and Cutting Edge covering the colourful and downright drab schemes applied to the type during its long service. With this wealth of aftermarket parts to pick from I was looking forward to producing something special.

Construction

Most modellers start by constructing the cockpit, but I decided to start with one of the most noticeable features of the A-7—that large chin intake. This is moulded in two pieces with a long horizontal seam that would be very noticeable on the finished model, so I had two options: fit a FOD cover or fill the seam. I decided to try filling, and fit a FOD cover if I mucked up. Once you have glued the intake parts together it is impossible to reach the back end of the seam so I removed the rear wall of the intake trunking with a razor saw: it would be replaced with plasticard once the intake had been completed. Next, I rolled some Milliput into long threads and manoeuvred and pressed them into position with a cocktail stick, using a damp finger to remove excess and created a good finish. Once the Milliput had cured I rolled some 1200-grit wet 'n' dry paper around a coffee stirrer to



A number of items are packaged with polystyrene blocks to prevent damage



The worst injector pin marks were inside the intake trunking, here filled with typewriter correction fluid



David started to detail the kit's cockpit (right) but gave up when Black Box released their excellent resin replacement



The Black Box cockpit after careful painting to lift out the detail



Eduard's prepainted instrument panel "looks amazing"



The Black Box resin replacement glareshield (left) is wider than the kit item



Seamless intake trunking is possible with a bit of work



Trumpeter supply the basics for the avionics bays



Main landing gear bays are well detailed straight from the box

created a small sanding stick which was used to get the joint perfectly smooth before spraying on a coat of white paint. This revealed few flaws which were easily filled with a drop of Kristal Klear applied with a cocktail stick, followed once dry by another coat of white paint.

I now turned my attention to the cockpit. Trumpeter's representation is very nice out of the box, but I decided to add some thin rod to its rear bulkhead to represent the wiring found in this area. I was quite pleased with the effect until, on my next visit to Hannants' London outpost, I saw the new resin cockpit from Black Box. Its level of detail is outstanding, far better than anything I could make from scratch, and the parts require only minimal cleaning-up. I test-fitted the replacement cockpit into the fuselage with the intake in place and found that you need to remove a small amount from the rear of the casting block to get a perfect fit. Another plus for the resin cockpit is that it adds enough weight to the forward fuselage to ensure that the

A-7 does not end up tail-sitting.

I used Humbrol Dark Gull Gray as a base coat for the cockpit before carefully painting the side panels in a very dark grey/black. Now for the bit I like best—picking out switches and knobs in grey and aluminium before highlighting some in yellows and reds prior to a final wash of black oils to create a 3-D effect. To paint the complicated moulded wiring on the rear bulkhead I used coloured gel pens which made this task quick and painless, and a lot easier than trying to paint these small details with a brush.

I was about to start painting the instrument panel when Eduard released their photo-etched frets, and after inspecting our review sample of the pre-finished interior set I knew that there was no way I would be able to produce anything as good. In just five minutes I had installed the brass parts to the Trumpeter instrument panel and glareshield. Another reason why I picked this route was that during test-fitting I found that the Black Box glareshield was larger than Trumpeter's

and though it had a better level of detail it would not fit inside the kit canopy without considerable modification that would have lost most of the detail.

The final stage in the cockpit was to fold the HUD frame from Trumpeter's etched brass. To do this accurately you really need to buy or borrow a hold-and-fold tool. These simple devices are a 'must have' when working with etched brass, as they clamp the part firmly in position while you use a Stanley knife blade to fold the brass to give you a sharp right-angle. Once I had painted the HUD frame I used my pet trick of cutting out the HUD glass from holographic confetti that catches the light and draws the attention of anyone looking at the model. This useful material can be purchased from branches of Hobbycraft in the UK in either 'dove' or 'bell' shapes, and can also be found in some stationery and craft shops.

The kit supplies a number of open avionics bays along the fuselage sides and these can easily be detailed with wire. However, I decided not to open

them on my model, but I still installed the bays in the fuselage halves as they add some rigidity to the sides. If you do the same, be sure to test-fit the parts before applying glue as the bay doors needed a small amount of trimming to obtain a good fit.

Now I turned to the one area on the kit that gave me problems: the main undercarriage bays. Out of the box these are some of the most detailed I have ever seen. I added only a few wires and some decal data panels from the spares box to get a very realistic effect. The problem was that I found their mounting points on the fuselage sidewall to be a bit vague and I could not get a perfect fit. This might just have been me, as one of my friends did not seem to have any major problem with his. But worse was to come!

At this point I joined up the fuselage and found that a small amount of filler and sanding was required. I had just got these joints looking good when one of my undercarriage bays came unstuck and fell into the fuselage interior. It took me nearly an hour of alternate

A-7 Corsair II

A-7A, VA-147 Argonauts, USS Constellation, January 1968. This aircraft is armed with Mk 83 1000lb bombs, AIM-9D Sidewinder missiles, and AGM-45 Shrike anti-radiation missiles



A-7A, VA-153 Blue Tail Fins, USS Oriskany, 1971. This aircraft is armed with Mk 82 500lb bombs



A-7B, VA-87 Golden Warriors, USS Ticonderoga, 1969



A-7B, VA-93 Ravens, USS Midway, May 1970. This aircraft is armed with Mk 20 'Rockeye' cluster bombs



A-7 Corsair II

A-7B, VA-87 Golden Warriors, USS Roosevelt, 1975



A-7B, VA-205 Green Falcons, NAS Atlanta, 1983



A-7C, VA-86 Sidewinders, USS America, 1972



A-7D, 353rd Tactical Fighter Squadron, 354th Tactical Fighter Wing
USAF, Korat Royal Thai Air Force Base, 1972



A-7 Corsair II

A-7D, 112th Tactical Fighter Group, Pennsylvania Air National Guard, 1991



A-7D, Arizona Air National Guard, 1981



A-7E, VA-113 Stingers, USS Ranger, 1970. This aircraft was flown by Cdr Weston H Bing



A-7E, VA-195 Dambusters, USS Kitty Hawk, 1972. This aircraft was flown by Cdr Mace C Gilfray



A-7 Corsair II

A-7E, VA-146 Blue Diamonds, USS Constellation, 1972



A-7E, VA-46 Clansmen, USS America, 1982



A-7E, VA-22, Fallon AFB, Nevada, 1987



A-7E, VA-72 Blue Hawks, USS John F. Kennedy, Operation Desert Storm 1991



A-7 Corsair II

A-7E, 104 Squadron, Royal Thai Naval Air Division, 1995



A-7E, Greek Air Force, Tanagra, September 2005. This aircraft wears a special display scheme for the 'Arhaggelos 2005' Air Show



A-7H, 347 Squadron, 110th Combat Wing, Larissa AB, 1980. This aircraft is armed with Zuni 5" rocket pods



swearing, fiddling and poking through available holes before I finally got the bay secured again. On my next A-7 I will ensure that the bays are very secure before joining the fuselage halves—after 30 years of building models you would have thought I would have learned that lesson by now. I next added the large ventral airbrake. Trumpeter give you a choice of showing this open or closed, but if your model is to be displayed on the ground the airbrake would not be open, so attach it in the closed position. You will need to do some trimming to get a good fit.

It was at this stage that I attached

all the airdials and other lumps and bumps to the fuselage, making a note to myself to be careful when handling my model from hereon.

With the fuselage complete I turned to the wings. These are designed to be mounted with the outer wing panels folded, and all the control surfaces are supplied as separate pieces so you can add a bit of individuality to your model. I decided to assemble the inner and outer wings separately and join them after painting. This proved to be an easy way to treat these parts and once assembled the folded wings are surprisingly strong. The wingfolds are nicely detailed with all

the hinges and locks represented.

Trumpeter supply 10 small L-shaped wires that fit between the folded wing panels, but I found it impossible to remove these from the sprues without breaking them so on my model I used thin plastic rod bent to shape. When attaching the wings to the fuselage I needed a small amount of filler on the uppersurfaces to get a good joint.

The tail surfaces are attached to the fuselage with small plastic rods. On previous Trumpeter models I have found these very weak, so now I always slide some brass tubing over them for reinforcement before attaching the

tailplanes with superglue.

The canopy and windscreen on this kit are beautifully clear and thin but need to be removed from the sprue very carefully to prevent damage. The canopy has a large seam down its middle which was removed with a sharp blade before using MicroMesh to restore its clarity. A final dip in Johnson's Klear gave a super shine and also provided a protective coating. This was important because the kit is unusual in that the clear part of the canopy is attached to a plastic and brass frame, and this requires superglue, whose fumes are notorious



for fogging canopies. The coat of Klear provided protection. The inner brass frame which fits within the plastic canopy has a set of rear view mirrors attached to it. Unfortunately I completely mucked up my frame as I was trying to curve it to shape, so I had to resort to some of my last ReHeat chromed brass mirrors attached directly to the plastic frame. I used odourless superglue to attach the clear parts to the plastic frame, followed by Kristal Klear to fill any gaps.

Before I started painting I made some canopy masks from Tamiya tape—a very easy process in this scale so long as you ensure that the tape is pressed well down into the frame and you use a new sharp scalpel blade to remove the excess. Finally, the windscreen was attached with superglue and the completed canopy temporarily installed in the closed position with PVA white glue.

Painting

I decided to paint my SLUF in the tactical grey scheme applied towards the end of the type's US Navy career. This is a wonderful scheme to paint as photographs show a wide range of finish from immaculate to so tatty that no-one would believe an airworthy aircraft could be that dirty. This effect is caused by the USN's anti-corrosion policy of applying new paint to all panels that show any wear, and as all modellers know, no two paints are identical once they have been exposed to the elements.

For a change I decided not to use my usual acrylic paints, and purchased a selection of suitable greys from the Humbrol range, with some of their own-brand thinners. I applied the basic two-tone Compass Gray camouflage scheme using Humbrol 127 and 128, followed by an airbrushing of the main panel lines with 140 Dark Gull Gray. Now for the

fun part. I mixed up various shades of the three colours and used flat brushes to create a stippling effect around various panels. Then I thinned some of the shades down for airbrushing and applied them to masked-off panels. Finally, CMK weathering powders made the patchy camouflage even dirtier, followed by a few simulated lubricant leaks before applying a coat of gloss varnish ready for decalling.

Decals

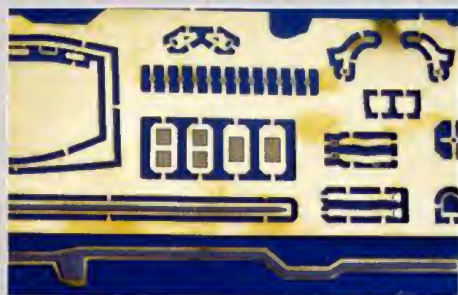
The kit's decals provide options for two attractive schemes in the classic Light Gull Gray over white scheme. A separate sheet provides markings for the comprehensive weapons options. The poor execution of some of the decals is disappointing. For example, data placards are represented by black panels with white squiggles. You might get away with this in 1/72 scale, but in 1/32 it just looks silly.

The decals themselves are typical of those from the Far East, being glossy, quite thick and in good register, but with the large number of high quality aftermarket decals available I cannot see many people using them.

German company Airdoc has produced an excellent reference book on the A-7 in USN service, and two decal sheets. The sheet I used was for the Atlantic squadrons and supplies five schemes and three sets of stencils, two in different shades of grey and one in white. Also supplied are two sets of walkways in both white and grey. These decals are printed by Superscale and worked very well when



A-7P, Portuguese Air Force, 1998. This aircraft was painted in a special commemorative scheme created to mark the aircraft's retirement after logging 64,000 hours over 18 years of operational life. The left side was dedicated to 302 Squadron, and the right side to 304 Sqn



The kit's brass frets provide useful detail parts rather than the working features once favoured by Trumpeter



Brass rod attached over the kit tailplanes' plastic plugs for added strength



The brass and plastic ducts look very realistic once in place



A few joint lines needed filling with typewriter correction fluid



Scraping the centre seam from the canopy left an ugly scar to be polished out with MicroMesh



The weathering process has started



The well detailed nose gear—note filled ejector pin marks



The broken plastic main landing gear and metal replacement prepared for painting



The Walleye's seeker head can just be seen here. Note red edges to the main gear doors applied with a gel pen





used in conjunction with their setting solutions. They fitted beautifully. I decided to reproduce the Gulf War scheme applied to an aircraft of VA-72 *Blue Hawks* which had an impressive bomb tally on the port fuselage.

If I had to score the kit's sheet I would give it five out of 10. The Airdoc sheet was first class and gets a straight 10.

Final Approach

I now decided to attach the undercarriage. In their last few kits Trumpeter gave an option for using either plastic or white metal parts. I decided to use the plastic parts, so the first step was to remove the seam lines

and fill a number of ejector pin marks using correction fluid. The nosewheel assembly comprises 13 parts and looks very impressive. The main legs are far simpler, comprising four parts, and looked strong enough to take the weight of the model.

The wheels are made up from plastic hubs and vinyl tyres. I would prefer to have a choice of either all plastic or plastic/vinyl, as the tyres look too shiny and do not take paint well. However, working with what was supplied, I used 1200-grit paper to remove most of the shine before rubbing the tyres' treads with a Dremel tool fitted with a sanding disc. The plan was to make the tread

look weathered, but I got a bit carried away and ended up with a set of tyres that look a bit too battered to be serviceable. I attached the completed undercarriage to my model and before fitting the undercarriage doors that I had previously painted I used a gel pen to add red edges to the doors as seen on most USN aircraft.

It is at this stage that I normally know I am over the worst, so I tidied up my bench and left the model overnight. Next day I returned to find that the A-7 had developed a distinct list. The fault was obvious: on one side the axle that holds the wheel to the main gear had failed, and that on the other side was on the verge of giving way. I had no choice but to remove the wheels and assemble the alternative white metal legs. These have the advantage of being far stronger, but the metal is very hard and cleaning-up the seam line would be a long process with jeweller's files. With my Dremel tool it took only a few minutes.

With the model almost complete I had to decide on its weapons load. The A-7 has six underwing pylons and two Sidewinder missile rails on the fuselage sides. These are very well moulded, with each pylon having three sets of sway braces—a detail that is often missed.



As for weapons, you are spoilt for choice as they take up no less than 16 sprues. You can pick and mix from two fuel tanks, one underwing FLIR pod, two GBU-8s, two GBU-10s, two AGM-62As, two AGM-12As, two AGM-45s, six AGM-65s, 12 MK 82 retarded, 12 MK 82 slicks (both with optional daisy cutters), six M 117s and two AIM-9 Sidewinders.

I decided to show my model with one fuel tank and the massive FLIR pod on the opposite pylon, and two AGM-62 Walleyes, as I do not know of another 1/32 scale kit that features this latter weapon. The AGM-62 has a clear nose and I used a punch-and-die set to produce a circular lens from holographic confetti which was attached with PVA to the inside of the glass lens to give an impression of the seeker head. Photographs show that towards the end of the Gulf War A-7s did not carry Sidewinders, so I left them off to reveal the moulded pylon detail that is normally hidden.

At this stage I applied a coat of Xtracrylics matt varnish and removed the masks from the canopy. It is always a relief to find that no paint has crept under the masks and that you have nice sharp frame lines. The main canopy which I had tacked into place with PVA was now reattached in the open position, followed by the clear wingtip navigation lights, subsequently coloured with Tamiya's clear red and blue paint applied with a 000 brush to finish the model.



Steps are made from brass and plastic; the HUD glass from holographic confetti catches the light



With wings folded the A-7 is quite compact. Note patchy effect of the finish, replicating US Navy's regular anti-corrosion treatment



In some ways this kit was a bit of a disappointment. It did not go together as easily as Trumpeter's previous release, the Me 262 (SAMI Vol 12, Iss 5), and the decals were nowhere near as good as the Twobobs-produced sheet that came with the F-105 Thunderchief. As with most Trumpeter kits there are a few small errors. Here they are confined to the shapes of the nose intake and the fin, but unless you have a set of accurate plans with which to compare, these faults are not that noticeable and the completed model certainly looks like a SLUF. With the addition of some aftermarket parts and a little TLC you can have a striking model, and the amount of weaponry that could left over for the spares box

will also be welcomed by many. That said, I cannot help wondering, if Trumpeter cut the volume of weaponry supplied by half and reduced the price by £10, would they sell more?

Nonetheless, I liked this kit and had a lot of fun building it. I hope the A-6

Intruder that we are promised from Trumpeter this summer will be as good.

Thanks to Pocketbond and Eduard for supplying the model and the etched brass, and my wallet for the Black Box cockpit set.

SAMI _____





Albatross D.V

Jasta 5 Dual Combo

Scale: 1/72	Kit No: 2101
Price: £11.75	Panel Lines: Recessed
Status: Re-issue	Decal Options: 6
Type: Injection Moulded Plastic	
Parts: Plastic 26 (X 2), Etched 106	
Manufacturer: Eduard	UK Importer: LSA
Includes two complete kits and Express Masks	



The kit's comprehensive decal sheet provides markings for six aircraft

References:

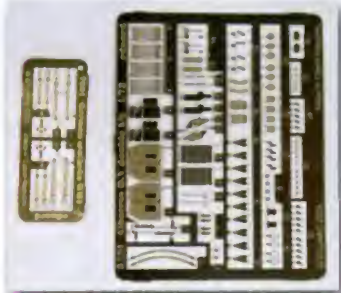
- Albatros Fighters. Windsock Datafile special
- German Air Aces of World War One, by Alex Imrie
- German Aircraft Propellers, by Michael Schoppmann (from Cross and Cockade Vol 32 No 2, 2001)
- German Air Forces 1914-1918, by Ian Sumner
- The Great Albatros Cook-up. www-cookup.com/albatros
- CG 3D Illustration: mwmillertheaerodrome.com
- Aero Conservancy: aeroconservancy.com

Thanks:

David Ryley deserves special thanks and a large round of applause for the much-appreciated help he provided during the build and preparation of this article. I believe most of the information David supplied concerning Hans von Hippel and his aircraft originated from Glen Merrill's book on Jasta 5 published by Albatros Publications.

A Pair of Green-Tailed

One of the attractions of modelling Great War aviation subjects is without doubt the beauty and diversity of the colour schemes and markings of the era. This is particularly true of the German *Jastas*, where personal markings became a work of art in their own right. One such unit, and probably one of the greatest exponents of this form of artwork, was *Jagdstaffel 5*. Formed in August 1916, *Jasta 5* was home to high-scoring aces such as Fritz Rumey, Otto K  nnecke and Joseph Mai, who helped take the unit's tally of victories to a total of 253 by the end of the war. But unlike some of the other *Jastas* of the period, it is not so much the pilots that are remembered today, but the aircraft.



Two etched frets are supplied

Six of these are the subject of Eduard's latest offering, combining two examples of their excellent 1/72 scale Albatros D.V/D.Va kits with a brand-new, eye-catching decal sheet. So many good colour options are provided that deciding which to model was a tough call, but eventually I settled on two diverse schemes. The first, and possibly one of the most instantly recognisable aircraft of *Jasta 5*, was Hans Joachim von Hippel's mount with its well-known



Kit instructions and painting guide

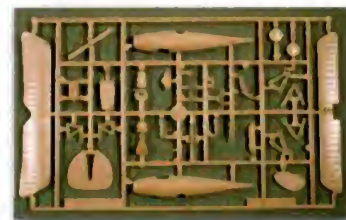
'Blitz' markings. The second, which I chose partially because its natural plywood fuselage contrasted well with von Hippel's aircraft, was Paul B  umer's 'Edelweiss' Albatros. My initial choice of subjects was based on a purely aesthetic viewpoint and I was unaware at the time of any connection between the two pilots.

An initial plea for information on von Hippel, about whom I could find very little, was answered by fellow modeller and *Jasta 5* enthusiast David Ryley, who was helpful to such an extent that this project could not have been completed without his aid. It was David's vast source of information that suggested a close link between my two chosen pilots.

An oath of brotherhood

Paul B  umer and Hans Joachim von Hippel first met at an aircraft park at Famers, where the two newly-trained airmen were awaiting their prospective initial postings. Both men had transferred from the army, although B  umer had gained a civil pilot's licence before the war. They became firm friends and often flew together. Eventually B  umer was posted to FA7, while von Hippel served as an observer on the

Eastern front in FA37, achieving his first victory in this capacity. By summer 1917 Paul B  umer had been transferred to *Jasta 5*, where he quickly gained a reputation as a balloon buster after shooting down three in the space of four days. His time at Boistrancourt was short lived and soon he was once again on the move, this time to *Jagdstaffel 2* (*Jasta Boelcke*) where he achieved another 15 victories before Christmas of that year. By this time von Hippel had retrained as a pilot and was himself posted to *Jasta 5* where he was frequently visited by his old friend and comrade and it was at the unit's New Year's Eve Party of 1917 that the two friends reportedly swore an oath of brotherhood, no doubt encouraged by more than a drop of alcohol! Von Hippel remained in *Jasta 5* until June 1918, having achieved one victory with the unit. In August he transferred to *Jasta 71* where he flew Fokker D.VIIs, adding two more kills to his tally taking his overall score to four. Paul B  umer continued to be successful in the skies above France, flying the Fokker Dr.1, Pfalz D.VIII (in which he was wounded when his aircraft crash-landed) and Fokker D.VII to reach an astounding total of 43 victories by the close of the war, making him the ninth highest-scoring German Ace of WWI. As a result,



All plastic parts are contained on just one sprue for each model



Devils

Dave Hooper builds Eduard's 1/72 Jasta 5 Albatros D.V Combo

Bäumer was one of only five pilots to receive both the Pour le Mérite (*Blue Max*) and Golden Military Cross. After the war both pilots continued to fly. Paul Bäumer tragically drowned following a crash at an aerobatic display near Copenhagen on 15 July 1927. Von Hippel survived to old age, despite flying in two World Wars, and died on the 6 August 1975. In his later years he was the source of much information concerning *Jasta 5* and his old friend Paul Bäumer.

A question of colours

Despite both von Hippel's and Bäumer's *Jasta 5* machines being well known and having recognisable colour schemes there is still a certain amount of confusion concerning them as I found out to my dismay (and embarrassment) when I began researching this piece. Von Hippel flew at least four Albatroses with a 'Blitz' motif, each slightly different. Some had lozenge wings and some were camouflaged in the earlier mauve and

green scheme. Add to this an old misconception that the lightning bolts were red and it's easy to see how so much uncertainty can evolve. Study of black-and-white photographs for clues as to the aircraft's colours can often inspire conflicting theories, and in the case of Bäumer's Albatros (of which he flew two in *Jasta 5*) this has resulted in the rear fuselage being interpreted as being painted either red or black.

Some of the colours have been verified by eyewitnesses, including von

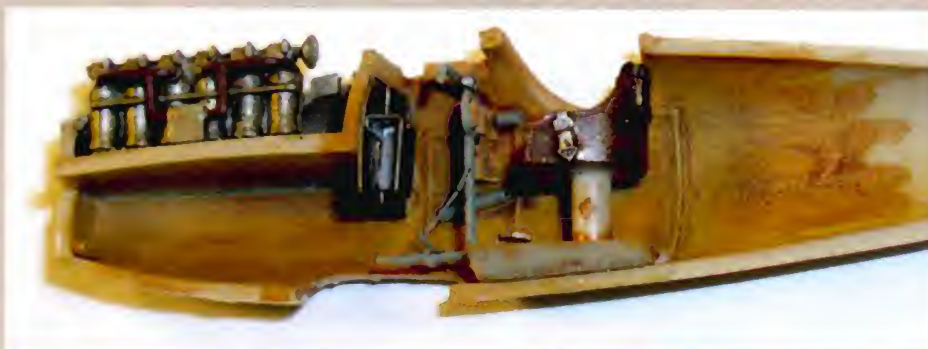
Hippel himself, but there are still those who beg to differ, especially in this age where so much information is so freely available on the Internet making it easy to get bogged down with conflicting visions as to how these machines actually looked. Fortunately Eduard have done a good research job, and the small colour schemes booklet that comes with the kit doesn't appear to be a million miles away from the popularly accepted view of how these machines looked during their short lives.



Internal parts built as sub-assemblies (the tiny cockpit is made up of 18 parts) before painting



Fuselage sidewalls, engine and cockpit components painted; and assembled



The Kit

The Eduard 1/72 scale tooling of the Albatros D.V/D.Va has been around for quite a while and was originally reviewed in *SAMI* for September 2000. The reviewer was very enthusiastic and it's easy to see why. The single sprue of plastic containing all major pieces is nicely moulded and virtually flash free. The panel lines have a fine sharpness about them without being overstated, while the ribbing detail exhibits the type of subtlety so typical of Eduard's modern toolings. Interestingly, the etched brass fret that comes with this reissue is brand new, containing enough pieces for both models. At first glance the two colourful decal sheets look impressive and are certainly well printed. The box also contains a small set of masks cut from Tamiya-style tape which is much easier to use than the poorly sticking grey stuff that Eduard used to supply. The instruction booklet and colour reference is comprehensive, and I see no reason why a perfectly good replica couldn't be constructed without additional reference material.

Which 'Blitz'?

Hans von Hippel flew at least four Albatroses with the 'Blitz' marking during his time in *Jasta 5*. The kit decals are for 4629/17, which is thought to have been von Hippel's third 'Blitz' and probably dates from around March 1918 (not January as Eduard claim). Not wishing to make life easy for myself, I decided to base my model on

5639/17, which was von Hippel's first Albatros. The two aircraft were very similar in appearance, the most notable difference being the underside of the upper wing, which on 5639/17 was lozenge. From a modelling point of view the biggest challenge would be reshaping the 'lightning bolt' as this was notably less angular on the earlier 'Blitz'.

Cockpit and engine

The cockpit is made up of 18 plastic and etched-brass parts, which considering the small scale of the model amounts to some pretty fiddly work. Of particular note are the etched brass



Fuselage halves joined



Cooling jackets of the etched Spandau machine guns formed around brass rod



Etched brass machine guns (top) compared plastic item



Elevator removed for repositioning in 'drooped' pose



Basic assembly completed and ready for painting



Wood grain finish of the Albatros's fuselage skinning was simulated using a combination of washing and dry-brushing



Airframe, tail and lower wings

The general fit of all basic parts was exemplary, and as a result very little filler was required. For von Hippel's Albatros I separated the elevator from the tailplane and repositioned it in a drooped position. While control horns for the elevator are supplied I've never been too enamoured with photo-etched control horns and made scratchbuilt replacements. Once the basic parts were constructed there were a few photo-etched details to add to the fuselage. All references I could find suggested that Bäumer's 'Edelweiss' machine did not have a strap across the nose at the front of its engine. It is also wise to check the position of the lift handles at the rear of the airframe as my references suggest they should be positioned closer to the tailplane than Eduard's instructions suggest.



seatbelts that are always a joy to use and add so much to the appearance of a finished model. Not content with the level of detail provided, I added grips to the control column, a machine gun support bar and a pressure pump to each model. The top half of a Mercedes 180 hp engine is provided, mounted on a plinth. It is important to mount the engine at exactly the correct angle as any slight deviation will result in problems mounting the two Spandau machine guns later on in the build. All the internal parts were constructed in sub-assemblies, then painted before finally putting them together.

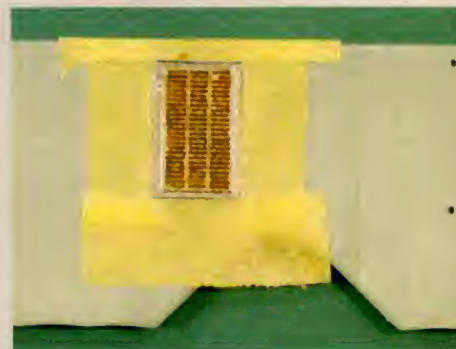
The first bout of painting

Once the basics are completed I always find it a good idea to paint the fuselage and upper portion of the lower wing before continuing. For von Hippel's 'Blitz' Eduard suggest painting the fuselage a light grey colour. Some references (including the Albatros Windsock Datafile Special) suggest that the colour was aluminium and many replicas have been painted this way, but to me this doesn't look quite right. For my model I decided upon a mix of silver and grey (*Silbergrau*) which was a common finish on Pfalz D.III's at the time.

Bäumer's machine had a standard plywood forward fuselage which was



Fuselage of von Hippel's machine has been painted and awaits decalling



Masking tape around etched radiator prevented any wayward dry-brushing marking the pale blue underside



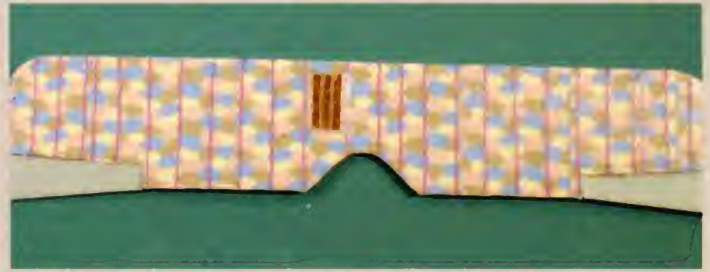
Bäumer's Albatros prior to decalling



'Blitz' decals applied to the Silbergrau-painted fuselage von Hippel's machine



"Baumer's 'Edelweiss' decal needed touching up with paint after a stupid mistake," notes Dave



Lozenge fabric underside of the upper wing of von Hippel's mount



Spandaus, exhaust and cabane struts have been added here



Finished radiator shutter



Upper wing installed on Baumer's Albatros



Rigging in progress, Dave favours smoke-coloured invisible mending thread for this.



Wings fully rigged, awaiting clean-up



Undercarriage trickier than it need be by absence of mounting pins on the legs



Pipe from radiator to engine was made from fuse wire



Modified kit item (left) to create the correct Heine (centre) and ETA propellers



Two pairs of Spandaus

Anybody who has experienced any of Eduard's WWI Profipacks will have encountered the dreaded photo-etched replacement machine guns. In the right hands they can be vastly superior to the originals, but the task of assembly is daunting to say the least, especially in 1/72 scale. I began by wrapping the cooling barrels around a piece of rod of a suitable diameter, but I did not glue the ends together as I felt that I would run the risk of blocking up some of that lovely detail. The barrels were then glued to the hacked-up remains of the original plastic Spandaus before adding the various pieces of tiny photo-etched detail. No matter how many times I attempt this type of construction it is still a major challenge and I usually expect a pair of machine guns to constitute an evening's work.



side decal didn't line up with the references I was using at the time, but I didn't twig that anything was wrong. The upshot was that I ended up having to remove the decals (damaging them in the process) and reapplying them in their correct positions. Naturally, some major touching-up work followed.

Upper wings

The undersides of the upper wings were painted pale blue. 5639/17 was then covered in lozenge, with the exception of the ailerons. For the lozenge I used some leftovers from an AVI decal sheet that came with Elf's recent Albatros Dr.I. This lozenge is slightly pale in colour compared to some sheets that I have,

replicated by washing and dry-brushing techniques over a sand-coloured base. The rear fuselage was painted red, but beneath the edelweiss motif was what appears to be a darker colour of irregular shape. It is possible that this patch covered up somebody else's personal markings as it is very likely that Bäumer's first Albatros would have been a hand-me-down. In an attempt to reproduce this I mixed red with a little hull red. For both aircraft the upper wings were painted in a green and mauve scheme. The kit supplies some useful-looking decals to tackle the red edges of the fin, tail, rudder and elevator, but these are not that easy to use, as they have large areas of very thin clear decal to keep their shapes and these tended to wrinkle and silver quite badly.

One very important lesson I've learned from this build is not to attempt any modelling work when I'm tired (at least that's my excuse and I'm sticking to it). This resulted in the port 'Edelweiss' motif being applied to the starboard side of the fuselage and vice-versa. The really silly thing is that I was aware that the shape of the port



Decal modifications

As noted, the 'Blitz' motif on 5639/17 was less angular in appearance than the decals supplied by Eduard. In order to produce the correct shape I applied the decals to the fuselage and then modified them by freehand painting. It took two evenings to achieve a result with which I was happy. One slight problem with the Eduard decal sheet is that the white bands on the fuselage iron crosses are too thin when compared with those on photographs of both von Hippel's and Bäumer's aircraft, so these were replaced with items from the spares box.



but the colours do tie up quite well with photographs I have seen of genuine four-coloured lozenge fabric, albeit in a faded condition. The lozenge was applied chordwise. Once dry the underside of the wing was sprayed with a thin coat of varnish and rib tapes added. Etched brass shutters are fitted to the underside of the radiator. In future I will be tempted to omit these parts as once the upper wing is in place the depth of the shutters tends to overcrowd the space between fuselage and upper wing. Both cabane and V-shaped interplane struts fitted well without adjustment, allowing the upper wing to be installed without problems.

The home straight

Both models were rigged using my favourite smoke-coloured invisible mending thread. Once I was happy that the glue holding the rigging in place had completely cured the outer



areas of both wings were cleaned up and painted. One of the more difficult stages of the basic construction turned out to be the undercarriage. While there are location points on the fuselage to fit the undercarriage, there are no corresponding pins on the struts themselves. This does not present a problem in itself, but it is nevertheless at odds with the user-friendly feel of

the rest of the kit.

Decals were applied to the upper and lower wings. 5639/17 had white-banded iron crosses on its underside, and these were taken from the original Profipack tooling of this kit. One obvious omission is the pipe that runs from the front of the engine to the radiator in the upper wing. This was made from 15-amp fuse wire. The kit provides

propellers that appear to be modelled on the Axial type. I reshaped both to represent the Heine and ETA types that were used on my two subjects. The Heine prop was painted in contrasting colours to represent laminations, while the ETA propeller was given an overall wood finish, as this type had a veneered surface. Finally, small details were added such as the control horns on

Bäumer's D.V. and a small mirror on von Hippel's 'Blitz'.

Conclusion

One of the nice things about this package is that the build can be adjusted to suit all levels of modelling skills. Those looking for a few evenings' enjoyment could quite easily produce a nice little replica without touching those fiddly-looking metal bits, while the more serious modeller would be more than happy with the level of detail available within the box. Let's face it, we all like a bargain and at a retail price of under £12 this has to be one of the more generously priced products on the market. For my money this Eduard tooling is still one of the best 1/72 scale WWI kits around, and with the addition of such an attractive decal sheet I can find little to complain about. As for my pair of 'Green Tailed Devils', I was satisfied with the end result, despite having a few self-induced hiccups during their build. Of the two, von Hippel's 'Blitz' was the more challenging, mainly because of my decision to build a machine not entirely catered for on the decal sheet. With four more options remaining it would be nice to build all six aircraft, but time is in short supply and in reality the best I can hope for is to complete one or two more. Now which one should I choose next?

SAMI





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The (Second) of Blenheim

BUILD 1/48
BY TOM HALL



For the benefit of overseas readers and non-GCSE history students the real Battle of Blenheim took place in 1704 (against the French, naturally.) My encounter with the Classic Airframes Blenheim also turned into quite a struggle—some of it, to be fair, of my own making—with advances, setbacks and endurance the order of the day, and with the final outcome often in doubt.

The Blenheim IV, along with the Whitley, Hampden and Wellington deserves its place in history not so much for its effectiveness as a bomber, but for being one of the front-line aircraft available when Britain went to war in 1939. As a consequence it had to help bear the brunt of the fighting for the first two or three years of the war. The advances in aircraft design at that time were such that between the first flight of the Blenheim prototype (as the Bristol

Type 142) in 1935—when it was hailed as an innovation in aircraft design—and the start of the war, it had become terribly vulnerable to the new generation of fighters. It had the distinction of carrying out the first RAF operation of the war (a reconnaissance sortie) and participating in the first bombing raid, but it soon became apparent that it was wholly unsuited to the task of daylight operations, particularly without fighter escort. During the Battle of France Bomber Command alone lost nearly 100 Blenheims, but after the fall of France it continued to be engaged in costly shipping strikes and other daylight raids.

By mid-1942 the Blenheim had virtually ceased to operate in Europe being replaced by Bostons and Mosquitoes. But its operations, as it battled through the early days of the war, had enabled Bomber Command to learn a number of valuable lessons.

Blenheims were sent to Malta and they also served in the Western Desert.

Perhaps it is because it has been considered a somewhat ineffective aircraft that the Blenheim not been popular with kit manufacturers (rather like its peers—when did you last see a Hampden model?). So when Classic Airframes brought out their 1/48 scale injection-moulded kit of the Mk IV/IVF, I thought it would make a nice change from the Phantoms and Bf 109s occupying much of the loft space.

The Kit

Classic Airframes have lived up to their name, and over the years have produced kits of some really classic aircraft. Some time ago I built their Westland Whirlwind, which made up into a pretty model without too much difficulty. However, their kits are manufactured as a limited-run and as their instructions



Kit contents. Because of the Blenheim's extensive glazing Classic have cast the whole nose section in clear plastic split into two halves



The resin components which make up most of the cockpit and internal nose area are nicely detailed and required only primer, paint and a dark wash. No decal is provided for the instrument panel, which had to be hand painted. "The rather sticky looking seat was my attempt to simulate a leather finish," notes Tom

Battle

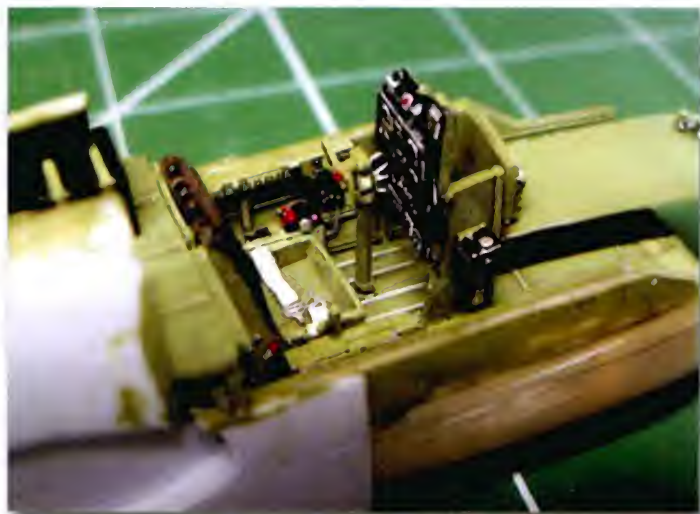
Tom Hall tackles Classic Airframes' 1/48 kit of the often overshadowed WWII bomber

clearly point out, they require additional effort to clean up and fit parts. Experience of multimedia kits is also required. You should not buy this model for junior's birthday unless he is particularly gifted in the manual dexterity department.

The kit allows you to build either the Mk IV bomber or Mk IVF fighter. The bulk of the airframe, which has nicely engraved panel lines, comes on three sprues, and these parts require only minimal cleaning up. The resin components are finely detailed and provide the full cockpit, two nicely detailed engines, wheel bays, bulkhead and a host of smaller parts including guns, exhausts, and two Vokes filters if you are looking for a tropical paint scheme.

The Blenheim IV had a peculiarly shaped nose which is cut down in front of the pilot, producing a distinctive





Built-up cockpit and nose sections. Tom added seat harnesses, throttles, knobs and a chart for the navigator's table which occupies most of the nose area

'wave' in the transparency. The front face of the nose also has two large square windows with an additional small oval pane on the starboard side. Possibly because of this extensive glazing Classic have cast the whole nose section in clear plastic split into two halves. In the preparatory stages I kept going back to look at this, anticipating problems in making a good fit with the rear part of the fuselage and achieving a tidy join down the centreline of the nose and cockpit canopies.

Nose job

The resin components which make up most of the cockpit and internal nose assembly are nicely detailed and only

required primer, Interior Green paint and a dark wash to bring out the shadow/shading, and highlighting. No decal is provided for the instrument panel, so this had to be detailed by hand.

Once the cockpit components were painted some thought had to be given as to how best to go about fuselage assembly. I usually like to show rudders and elevators slightly displaced, so I cut away the rudders from the two fuselage halves. The instructions advise you to test-fit the resin sidewalls to the cockpit floor as well as to the inside of the windscreen/canopy before fitting. Good advice, but with only the usual two hands (and in my case a surplus of thumbs) this was not an easy task.

The two nose sections were then (carefully!) joined together with small beads of superglue on the clear surfaces and when dry slotted over the internal assembly. The fit was not as bad as I had anticipated. The fuselage/nose joint was very good, with only a bit of cutting needed around the wingroot area, and the Perspex panels had stayed clear. I was sufficiently inspired that I glued it all into place and it was only when it was dry that I realised that the upper rear of the instrument panel was visible through the pilot's windscreen. Convinced that it wouldn't be seen I had not detailed this as well as I might have done. Having earlier (and to my wife's despair) permanently buried a fully-detailed J47

jet engine inside a 1/32 scale Sabre you have to wonder if you can ever do the right thing at the right time?

The rear turret assembly fits into place as part of the fuselage top decking, and needs to be secured well. I tend to prepaint parts, and painted surfaces do not provide a good adhesion for glue. I managed to knock off and lose the part inside the depths of the fuselage at a later stage of construction, necessitating remedial action using a dentist's probe and accompanying curses.

Engines and wheel wells

Tackle these at the start of the day when you are feeling good, and ready to climb





The two nose sections primed, glazed and masked. Note the two spots (fitting guides only) on the lower section



Resin wheel well components and one of the kit's Bristol Mercury engines



Resin insert finally went into place



Hatched area marked out on one wing needed much scraping away to get the resin parts bay to fit



Locating holes for the main gear legs; these have to be clear of the lower surface of the engine nacelle for the legs to fit



Here you can just see the locating blocks sticking out at the front of the wheel bay

mountains. The problem is that, even after cutting away as much of the excess resin as possible, the wells will not fit properly into the engine nacelle recesses in the upper wing. The wheel bay also incorporates the locating holes for the main undercarriage legs and these holes have to be left clear of the lower surface of the engine nacelle for the undercarriage to fit.

In order to get the resin inserts into position I had to scrape away and thin-down the plastic interior at the rear of the engine nacelles. So much resin had to be cut away that I got dangerously close to breaking through the moulding. Spraying the interior of the wheel bay with grey primer beforehand gave warning when I was getting too close for comfort, because the darker colour began to show through as I approached the internal detail.

With the wheel wells fitted, the upper and lower wing sections were joined together and mated to the fuselage. The tailplane, with the elevators cut away, was also assembled and attached. No locating pins or slots are provided so I drilled appropriate holes and used plastic dowels to give the tailplane a more secure fixing.

Rather than simply paint the port wing's landing light panel silver, I cut it away and replaced it with a strip of clear plastic which I had previously drilled out and painted with two simulated lamps in the rear. When I came to file and sand it to shape I found that it had an internal flaw which spoiled all the effort. Sometimes you have those days. The wingtip navigation lights were similarly replaced with pieces of red and green plastic (from a toothbrush) which

thankfully sanded and polished into shape without mishap.

The undercarriage components are a strange mixture of plastic mouldings and a couple of delicate resin pieces. These were simply painted silver, given a black wash, and highlighted. Brake pipes were added using wire and the various

components put aside for the finishing stage. A glance at the instruction sheet suggested this could also turn out to be another fiddly operation.

The engines are nicely cast. Now, those good people at Classic Airframes always give you warning of trouble ahead when they include the word

Note in the instructions. The Blenheim's engines had a series of small exhausts which ran up to the collector ring around the cowling of the engine. My references, including a close-up photograph of the Duxford-based Blenheim, showed two exhausts on each cylinder. With nine cylinders





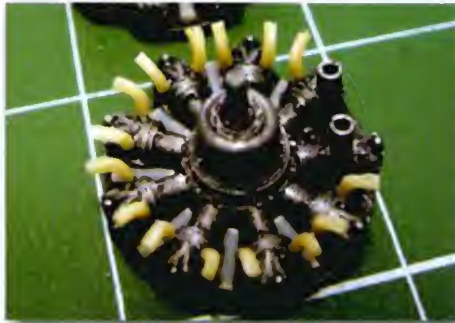
Note the leading-edge landing light cut away. Tom drilled out and painted two simulated lamps from clear plastic



The undercarriage components, mix of plastic mouldings and delicate resin pieces. Tom added brake pipes from wire



The resin engines are nicely cast and responded well to painting and drybrushing



Kit supplied resin exhausts (cream colour in first photos) were replaced with orange wire



Tom brushed raw umber oil paint along panel lines to start the weathering process... then had to do it all over again!

per engine and two exhausts per cylinder that works out at 36 exhausts in all. Classic supply only 18. However, no big problem, as small pieces of telephone wire do the job just as well. What was a problem was that those beautifully detailed engines simply would not fit inside the cowlings

without hacking a good slice of resin away from all around the circumference of the castings. I did wonder, at this stage, if the resin manufacturer was supplied with any details/dimensions of the plastic parts into which his products were meant to fit!

Now, you can try fitting the engine

(after surgery) inside the cowling and then adding the individual exhausts between the cylinders and the cowling if you prefer, but either way, it is a delicate and tricky operation. With my method you cannot avoid shedding a few exhausts as you push and prod the unit into place. Because of the fit it is also

difficult to set the engine squarely with the front face of the cowling. The propellers are supplied as separate plastic blades and have to be fixed to the hub—another tricky task requiring the locations to be marked out and/or a jig to be made if you are to ensure a properly aligned unit.





Time for paint

The previously removed elevators were assembled and put in place together with the slightly offset rudder. I Blu-Tacked the engine nacelles in place, masked off the openings and nose glazing, and the Blenheim was ready for painting.

When I bought the kit I had intended to finish it in the Coastal Command grey/green scheme which I thought suits the Blenheim rather well. However, at the last minute I decided to go for the standard green/brown camouflage and in particular the aircraft (GB-D) in which Wing Commander Hughie Edwards of 105 Squadron won the Victoria Cross on the Bremen raid on 4 July 1941. So, it was three successive sprays of Sky (I always liked the name duck-egg blue), Dark Earth and Dark Green, each colour being highlighted with a lighter mixture as I went along.

As a general rule I use raw umber oil paint to start the weathering process, and after a good spray of Humbrol gloss varnish this was brushed along and into the panel lines. Now, oil paint is thinned with turps and a prior coat of varnish is essential to stop it eating into the original paint finish. I have used tins of Humbrol varnish for this purpose for years but this time I chose to use bottled Gloss Cote. When I came to rub the raw umber oil paint away with a rag I found it had eaten away the varnish around the panel lines! Don't you just hate it when you think you have reached the top of a hill to find another mountain ahead of you? After a frantic cleaning up of all the surfaces and a later spray of varnish (from an old tin) the damage appeared not too bad. When I had calmed down and inspected the writing on the Gloss Cote bottles I found in letters about .25 mm high the advice *Thin with white spirit*. Moral: always read the label.

The weathering process was then repeated without incident and a further coat of varnish applied to provide a suitable surface for the decals. These were a mixture of the kit's and a Tally Ho sheet which provided the appropriate codes. A final coat of matt varnish was then applied and the masking removed. For once, the canopies emerged as good

as new (but wait...), and strips of painted masking tape were used to frame them and hide that join in the nose which had worried me earlier.

I painted the front cowlings a mixture of bronze and silver and attached the engines to the airframe. I then remembered that, in most illustrations, the very front of the cowl ring appears silver. I masked off all but the front ring of each engine cowl and the adjacent wing section, wrapped (I thought) the nose section with a paper towel, and for speed sprayed the appropriate area using a can of Halford's silver, outside and on a breezy day. Well, of course, when I came to inspect my handiwork the two flat Perspex panels in the nose were now silver and loose spray sprinkled other sections of the nose. I tell you, this Blenheim nearly made its first flight across the garden

there and then, and my cries of "You stupid boy!" were a credit to *Dad's Army's* Captain Mainwaring. Nothing I had would shift the silver (does anyone know what *will* remove this stuff?).

Since I had few options I decided to drill and cut out the two offending panels and replace them with clear plastic. Naturally, while drilling through the panels the bit hit the navigator's work table and knocked it loose. So, it was another dentistry job for tweezers, probing and curses as I worked through the small opening in the nose. However, it did all go back together and the replacement panels were probably clearer than the originals had been.

The undercarriage is made up of the main oleo struts which locate in two holes in the wheel bay casting, a number of braces and two retraction jacks. You can either try to assemble

these components into a whole but somewhat delicate unit and then locate it into the appropriate slots within the nacelles, or build it up piece by piece. I chose the latter route, starting with the main legs and then, using a pair of thin tweezers, adding the supporting parts into the recesses of the wheel bays.

According to my references this particular aircraft had the twin Browning installation in the turret and there is not a lot of room in which to fit this assembly. I decided to increase the depth of the bottom skirt of the turret with an additional strip of plastic as it did not seem to sit quite high enough as supplied. This particular aircraft also carried an aft-facing machine gun in a transparent under-nose faring (supplied in the kit) so this was added together with the pitot tube, masts and aerials. Apparently, Wg Cdr Edwards had a rear-view mirror fitted on top of the canopy, so I fashioned this from scrap plastic.

Battle won

At the end of a long day the battle was finally over and it was time to take stock. Not the easiest of builds and not the best standard of work I have achieved. Certainly not the best project to use as a first exposure to resin accessories. Classic themselves advise that you should not tackle their projects unless you have previous experience. If you like 'Just add glue and shake the box' kits this is not for you, but with care and patience you end up with a nice model, and all credit to Classic Airframes for producing it.

SAMI





Lancer

Steve Evans builds Classic Airframes' 1/48 scale Republic P-43, forerunner of the 'Jug'



This kit is old. I'm not entirely sure when it was first released, but I can assure you this is no longer cutting-edge technology. The light grey plastic on two sprues is hard and a little brittle, but reasonably well formed. There are no sinkholes or major deformities, but there is some serious flash on all parts. The injection gates are big and the mould release pin marks are heavy, but thankfully not on visible areas.

You also get a separate poly bag of resin parts (quite a few were broken in my kit) which have nice detail work and are quite finely done, but nonetheless are beginning to show their age. Also in the box are two vacform canopies (thanks CA, that duplication is always nice to have) as well as a tiny etched instrument panel and acetate



Kit contents



Resin parts "are quite finely done, but beginning to show their age", and some were broken



Would sir like some flash with that?



Huge ejector pin stubs had to be removed from interior surfaces of the wings, which also had to be thinned to accommodate the resin undercarriage bay insert



Preparation completed, the wing components are firmly clamped together



The kit's resin P&W R1830-35 engine is supplied as a crankcase, reduction gear casing and 14 separate cylinders, to which Steve added an ignition harness



backing produced by Eduard.

The box itself was looking pretty beaten-up, but the artwork is half-decent and it had (mostly) done its job of protecting the parts. I was building this model for my friend Chris Ellis, who has a fine collection growing. He is concentrating on the Pacific Theatre during the early years of WWII and a P-43 would fit in well as one of the 'oddities'. As CA is the sole manufacturer to have produced one in 1/48 scale this is the only game in town, so let's see what we can do with it...

Instructions

Two-part instructions are provided. Part 1 is an A5-sized foldout containing history and technical data, sprue layout diagrams and bag contents, and four

pages of well-drawn, perfectly clear exploded-view construction diagrams. Part 2 is a two-sided sheet of painting and marking guides. The diagrams are black-and-white, but well drawn and perfectly clear.

Construction

According to the instructions assembly should begin with the cockpit. However, I was going a bit sideways with this because I sprayed all of the cockpit pieces with White Ensign Zinc Chromate Green (ACUS22) as the base interior colour, and as with all of WE's enamels, they require some time to 'go off' properly. This meant that actual construction started with the wings, which comprise four-parts: a lower wing surface and two upper wing halves joined together and trapping a

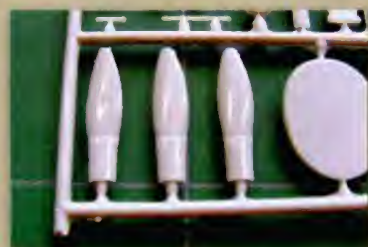




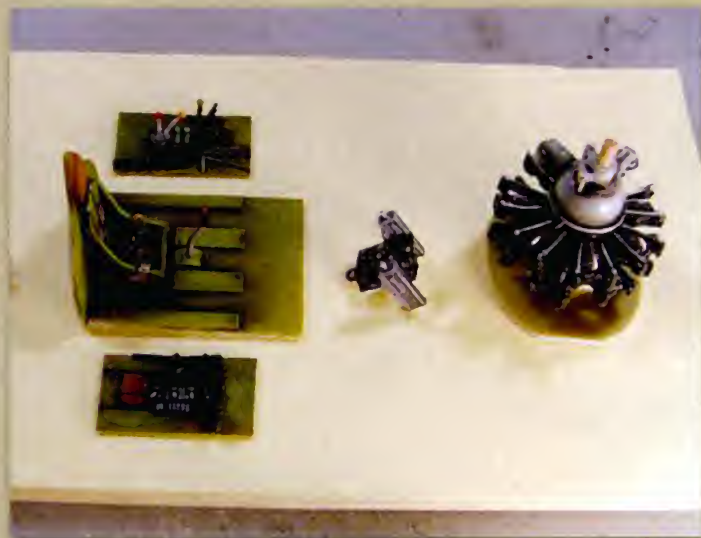
The damaged resin instrument panels and scratchbuilt replacements with wiring bundles added



Kit's unrealistic resin gun breeches were replaced with plasticard and rod



As supplied the kit's propeller blades are "oversized giants", and benefited from thinning. "I don't think I went far enough," says Steve



Cockpit interior and engine, ready for fitting

resin wheel bay. And here came the first problem: the wing upper halves matched up reasonably well with the lower surface until I put the resin bay in place, thereby creating a huge gap along the leading-edges because the resin part was bigger than the space into which it fitted. This meant removal of the huge ejector pin stubs in the wings and thinning out of the wing itself, as well as the resin bay. It took time but eventually all connected.

With the wings set aside I returned to the cockpit, whose resin sidewalls are reasonably detailed although nothing special. With careful painting, the addition of a couple of levers to the throttle box and Eduard etched belts to the seat it began to look pretty good. Have I already mentioned problems? Here are some more. The side instrument panels are supplied in resin, but these were in pretty poor condition so I elected to bin them and make a couple of new ones out of plasticard. This involved punching the correct size holes into a length of 10-thou card, backing this with 20-thou card and cutting to shape. Wire bundles made from stretched sprue and tied together with fishing line were attached and the whole thing painted up prior to fitting.

Next up were the gun breeches. On this aircraft, like so many early US types, they projected back into the

cockpit, presumably so that the pilot could clear blockages. The items supplied as resin representations of those breeches were not very gun-like, so it was out with the plasticard and rod to make my own.

Then came the engine, which is supplied as a crankcase, reduction gear casing and 14 separate cylinders, all in resin. This was relatively straightforward to make, although the cylinders did require careful cutting and trimming away from their casting block. Once painted, and with the addition of some ignition wires, the whole thing looked pretty good. It was set onto its bulkhead and along with the cockpit parts and the supercharger in the rear fuselage, it was ready to fit. Did I say *fit*? What I meant was 'not

even come close to fitting'! With the bulkhead in place the engine was massively too big to go inside the cowling, leaving a gap of about 4 mm on top and 6 mm at the bottom joint. What on earth is the point of producing a resin part that does not fit your own kit? I haven't had the chance to build any of CA's new kits but I hope they are better than this.

As you can imagine, I was not best-pleased, and set to work thinning out

the interior of the cowling and trimming off the rocker covers on the forward bank of cylinders. This hack-and-slash work finally allowed the cowling to close up around the engine, and with the rest of the interior parts in place the fuselage was set aside to dry whilst I turned my attention to another oddity: the propeller.

The kit's prop blades are giants, looking more like they belong on a P-47 than a P-43. They are of the correct





"It took some doing but eventually the kit's hideous undercarriage legs looked quite respectable"



Kit pitot probe (left) and Steve's much finer plasticard and rod replacement



length, but the width of the blades, especially around the cuff, is all wrong. I marked them out and trimmed them a fair bit, but I have to admit that I don't think I went far enough.

With that done and the fuselage dry, the wings were trial-fitted, revealing a gap of about 20-thou along the joint at the starboard wingroot. I filled this with a length of plasticard and set the wings in place. Once dry, all joints took a fair amount of filler to get them looking reasonable. The horizontal tail surfaces went on without problems and the cockpit was masked off in preparation for painting.

Painting scheme

There is only a single colour scheme in the box, identical for both sets of markings: Olive Drab upper surfaces and Medium Gray undersides. The

instructions quote FS34087 for the green and FS36173 for the grey. However, the Federal Stock numbering system for US paints didn't exist in the 1940s, so these are just approximations of the period Olive Drab 41 and Neutral Gray 43. There are plenty of paint manufacturers who now do 'authentic' colours so finding a shade that fits your view of what they should look like won't be a problem.

To start, the whole airframe was given a couple of coats of Halfords grey plastic primer, which in itself is a pretty good match for Neutral Gray. I masked-off the control surfaces as well as various panels on the underside and gave it a couple of light sweeps of White Ensign's Neutral Gray which is just a shade darker. With the masking removed this gave some variation to the panels. Once dry this was masked-off

with rolls of Blu-Tack, tape and masking fluid before the upper surfaces were sprayed Life Colour FS34088 with 10% white added. Once again I masked-off some of the panels and oversprayed with raw FS34088 to give some colour variation, and once this was dry it was out with the pastels for some weathering.

It was at this stage that I noticed a serious omission on my part. I'd completely forgotten about the gun muzzle fairings on the top of the engine cowlings... *Doh!* Once these had been attached and painted the undercarriage bay was masked-off and sprayed with

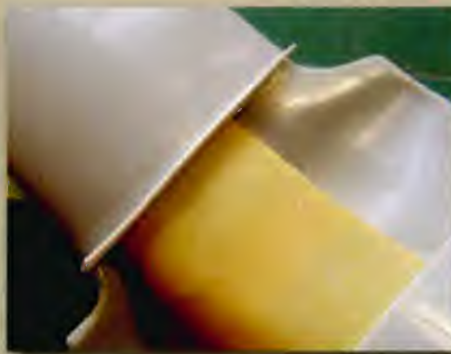
WE's Zinc Chromate. The whole airframe was then given a couple of coats of Johnson's Klear in preparation for the decals.

Decals

Any aircraft with such a short and limited service career as the P-43 is going to have a narrow selection of markings, but CA have done a fine job in coming up with something interesting. Option 1 is for an aircraft of



Trial installation of the engine showed it was not even close to fitting



Gap in starboard wingroot filled with 20-thou plasticard



Base coat of Halfords grey primer sprayed over the entire airframe prior White Ensign's Neutral Gray for the underside



Two-tone Olive Drab applied



Doh! Steve had forgotten to install the muzzle fairings on top of the engine cowlings



Wheel wells masked-off and sprayed Zinc Chromate



from the sprue, the main legs are hideous things with masses of flash. It took some time with drills, files and knife to get them looking more realistic, and with the addition of a scissors link (from an Eduard P-39, thank you spares box), brake lines and flexible hoses, they ended up looking quite respectable. The tailwheel was another problem. The strut itself is resin and very fragile (I broke it twice during construction). It was also too long in its standard form, needing about 3 mm trimmed to get the correct height.

The kit gunsight is a terrible little resin piece that I had to replace with a scratchbuilt item that at least looked more representative of the real thing. The wing guns and the pitot tube were also poor. The guns were replaced with items from the spares box, and I scratchbuilt the pitot from stretched sprue and 10-thou card.

The canopy was good, with nicely defined framework that was easy to paint, and once cut and positioned it looked good and afforded a reasonable view of the cockpit interior.

With all these items in place and



the 1st Pursuit Squadron, USAAC, in 1941. This had the Type 1 stars with black unit markings and 'U.S. Army' on the wing undersides. There is some debate as to whether or not this aircraft should have its tail number repeated on the upper and lower wings as per the P-35, but in the absence of any definitive information I followed the kit instructions.

The second option is for an aircraft of the Chinese Air Force in 1943, with 12-pointed 'sun' disc in six positions and blue/white-striped tail, but no individual aircraft serial numbers. I would have gone for that version myself as I like those early

Chinese markings but it wasn't my call—Chris wanted the USAAC aircraft.

The decals are produced by Microscale and thus are beautifully printed, in perfect register, with good colour and excellent density. They are very thin but strong enough to be moved around if necessary, reacting well (as they should) to Microscale's own setting solutions by conforming to all the curves and bumps without a trace of silvering. Perfect!

Final Assembly

This phase of the job was quite a drawn-out experience, centred mainly around the undercarriage. Straight



that still-too-broad propeller installed, it actually looked pretty good.

Conclusion

This kit was hard work. I won't lie to you and gloss over the problems. Everything I touched needed some sort of additional work, but if you want a P-43 Lancer in this scale you have no options—this is all there is. Despite all the problems of fit (that engine and the wheel well especially) and outline accuracy (propeller and tail) you can produce a good-looking, fairly accurate representation of this historically

important aircraft.

CA can be saluted for producing some 'off the beaten track' types that have only a limited interest. The major manufacturers wouldn't touch this kind of thing, so despite needing patience and enthusiasm, the end result is worth it.

Next time you see one of these languishing on a trade stand, don't just dismiss it as being 'old hat'. It may be old, but with a bit of plastic surgery it can look almost as good as this year's supermodel.

SAMI _____



Photo: USAF Photo Archives

Lancer history

The P-43 Lancer was a stepping-stone, a development of Alexander Kartveli's Seversky P-35 and a direct ancestor of the awesome P-47 Thunderbolt. One look at this aircraft and the family resemblance is obvious. The P-43 looks every inch the mini 'Jug'.

In 1938 the final production P-35 airframe was taken from the Seversky production line and experimentally fitted with a 1,200 hp Pratt & Whitney R-1830-19 radial engine with integral two-stage supercharger. It was given the designation XP-41. At the same time a second airframe, similarly powered but with a turbosupercharger mounted in the rear fuselage, was built as a private venture, and designated AP-4. Aft of the engine firewall both airframes were externally similar, but in its initial configuration the AP-4's R-1830 was very close-cowled and fitted with a large propeller spinner in pursuit of low drag. However, this configuration led to engine cooling problems and a more conventional 'open face' radial cowling was quickly adopted.

This aircraft showed some promise, resulting on 12 March 1939 in an order for 13 service test aircraft under the designation YP-43. The YP-43 differed from the prototypes in having an R-1830-35 engine giving 1,200 hp for take-off and 1,100 hp at 20,000 feet; reduced fuselage side area and a lower profile cockpit canopy in pursuit of drag reduction; relocation of the turbosupercharger intake from the port wingroot to below the engine in a deeper, oval-shaped cowl; and a longer tailwheel. Two wing-mounted 0.30 machine guns supplemented the AP-4's two cowl-mounted 0.50s.

The US Army Air Corps took delivery of the first Republic YP-43 in September 1940 (the former Seversky Aircraft Corporation had been reorganised as the Republic Aviation Corporation during the previous year). By April 1941 all 13 YP-43s were in Army hands, and the name Lancer chosen for the new aircraft. In the meanwhile, however, the USAAC had placed an order for 80 of the more advanced AP-4J/P-44 variant, later increased to more than 900, but the P-44 was never to be built as such. Combat reports from the war in Europe revealed that it would be inferior to German aircraft and the project was cancelled in favour of the then in-development Republic AP-10, which became the P-47 Thunderbolt.

As a stop-gap to keep Republic's Farmingdale, New York production lines moving a new order was placed for 54 P-43 Lancers, plus the 80 P-44s, which were to be completed as P-43As with P&W R-1830-49 engines that could provide the full 1,200 hp to an altitude of 25,000 feet.

In the meanwhile, under Lend-Lease contracts China had ordered 125 P-35A-1s, which were externally similar to the 'A' model but had a -57 engine, four .50 guns, armour plating in the cockpit and self-sealing fuel tanks.

Lancer production ended in March 1942, by which time it had become readily apparent that the P-43 wasn't a great combat aircraft. Once fitted with armament, armour, radio gear and those self-sealing fuel tanks (which steadfastly refused to seal) performance suffered. The Chinese aircraft—only 108 of which were delivered—saw some service against the Japanese, but the USAAC declared the aircraft unsuitable for combat, and its P-43s and P-43As were converted to the photo-reconnaissance role as P-43Bs and 'Cs'. Some of the final batch which had not been delivered to China went to the Royal Australian Air Force in 1942.

Even though the Lancer was designed and produced at a very turbulent time, becoming quickly obsolescent, it deserves its place in any model collection as the Thunderbolt's granddaddy.





Elderly FROG kit "in its yellowing box"



"Basic but well-moulded kit that with some simple scratchbuilding could be made into an acceptable model."

References:

- French Aircraft from 1939 to 1942: Volume 2 from Dewoitine to Potez, by Dominique Breffort & Andre Jouineau. Histoire & Collections, 2005 ISBN: 2-915239-49-5
- French Fighters of World War II in Action, by Alain Pelletier, Squadron/Signal Publications, 2002 ISBN: 0-89747-440-6



Joe made a more realistic seat with plasticard and stretched sprue, with masking tape harnesses



One of my ongoing projects is the construction of the five 1/72 scale single-engined Armée de l'Air fighters that took part in the Battle of France. The models completed so far have been relatively recent issues (Hasegawa's Morane Saulnier MS.406, Pegasus's Arsenal VG.33 and Azur's Bloch MB.155), so this elderly kit from FROG would make an interesting comparison. The yellowing box's contents revealed a basic but well moulded kit that with some simple scratchbuilding could be made into an acceptable model.

Construction

First to be tackled was the cockpit, supplied as just a basic floor and seat. A more representative seat was made from plastic sheet and stretched sprue, painted matt sand for the seat fabric and medium grey for the frame, with masking tape seatbelts added. An instrument panel was cut and sanded to shape from plasticard and various sized holes drilled to represent the gauges. This panel was then finished in matt black and backing panels from white plasticard were added, the drill holes being filled with Kristal

Klear to simulate the instrument glasses. A control column was made from stretched sprue. This unit was then set aside for later insertion into the fuselage once it had been assembled.

On the fuselage halves I drilled out the exhaust stacks and supercharger intakes and filled some sink marks before joining. The seams needed some minor filling and cleaning up, which also revealed that, while the shape from the cockpit aft was fairly good, the forward upper fuselage contours were far from accurate, being too wide and flat and missing the chin intake. Achieving the correct shape would have broken through the inner surface of the mouldings, so the rework was limited to making the fault less obvious. The separately moulded rudder was added and the cockpit assembly inserted into the interior, which had been painted dark grey.

The wings consist of upper and lower panels, a lower centre-section and separate ailerons. The radiator tub is moulded into the centre-section, so to eliminate 'see-through' effect a piece of sheet styrene was cut to size and painted to represent the radiator. The wing panels were assembled, the ailerons fixed and a

hole drilled for a pitot tube. Trial-fitting of the wings showed that the centre-section was undersize and that there would be a gap between leading-edge and fuselage. The wing panels were then glued to the fuselage with the centre-section temporarily secured to give the correct dihedral, then thin strips of styrene were added to the upper leading-edges of the wing before the centre-section was glued in place. With a little gentle pressure the centre-section conformed to the wing contour and was secured with liberal applications of masking tape and clothes pins, then left to dry overnight. There was still a gap in the leading-edge which was filled with Tamiya putty, along with the seams at the wing/fuselage joints. At this point holes were drilled in the leading-edges for the gun ports. The horizontal stabilisers, consisting of upper and lower panels, was assembled and its separate elevators joined before they were attached to the fuselage with medium cyanoacrylate, allowing time to ensure that things were square.

The FROG kit's canopy consists of a single moulding that is not very clear, so after polishing it with a nail stick it was

Reviving an old Frenchman



Joe Sheppard breathes new life into FROG's vintage Dewoitine D.520



Exhaust stacks and supercharger intakes were drilled out



Upper fuselage contours were inaccurate, being too wide and flat and missing the chin intake



Sheet styrene insert represents the radiator and prevents 'see-through' effect



dipped in Future/Klear and left to cure for a few days. Whilst admiring the results I realised that the sliding hood portion had horizontal frames that were only present on the prototypes, so I stripped the Future with Windex (an ammonia-based glass cleaner), scrapped off the frames and repeated the polishing and dipping. The canopy was masked off, and as the rear portion forms part of the fuselage structure I glued it in place with Kristal Klear before finishing. Masks for the rear canopy panels were made by scanning a side-view drawing and reducing it to the appropriate size, then transferring the contours to masking tape, which was cut-out and applied. After rubbing down the edges of the tape they were sealed with Future and a coat of dark grey paint applied to give the internal frame colour.

Finishing

The model was finished with Model Master enamels, the lower surfaces being painted light blue/grey and the upper surfaces in three-tone camouflage of dark blue/grey, khaki, and earth brown. After the paint had thoroughly dried the masking was removed and a coat of Future applied in preparation for the decals.

The small decal sheet included in the kit had yellowed with age, and as the reds and blues were in RAF shades it would have been unusable anyway. Carpena decal sheet 72.15 'Battle of France' markings for D.520C-1 No 129 of the 2nd Escadrille GC 1/3 of May 1940 were used. The decals slid into position easily but needed Micro Sol to settle into the contours, the only problem being the vertical rudder stripes



Undersized centre-section was undersize left a gap between wing leading-edge and fuselage



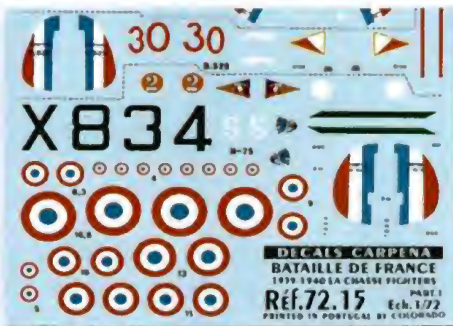
Wing panels were glued to fuselage and thin strips of styrene added



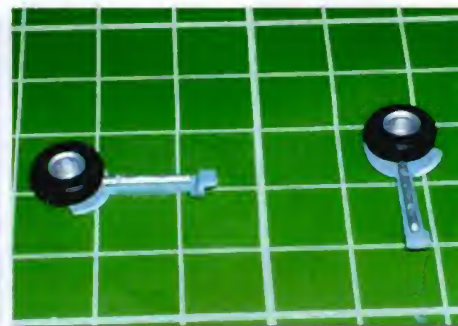
Canopy masked and fixed in place with Kristal Klear before painting started



Camouflage paint completed a coat of Johnson's Future/Klear was applied prior to decalling



Carpena decal sheet 72.15 'Battle of France' which Joe used for his D.520



Undercarriage's axles were cut flush with the wheel hubs rather than melting with a hot knife



Almost there! Joe has completed four of his planned collection of five Battle of France veterans, left to right: Morane Saulnier MS.406, Arsenal VG.33 and Bloch MB.155, with D.520 in the foreground

which were undersize. The decals were sealed with another coat of Future/Klear and a coat of matt acrylic clear applied.

The model was completed by painting and assembling the landing gear, which was a little different from modern practice in that the legs are glued to the doors and the doors inserted into the wing. The axles were cut flush with the wheel hubs rather than melting with a hot knife as recommended in the instructions. Propeller, antennas, tailwheel and a stretched sprue pitot probe completed the build.

The kit obviously shows its age, but application of a few modelling techniques results in a replica that stands up well against its more current brethren. An enjoyable build. Only a SMER reissue of the Heller Caudron-Renault CR.714 to go!

SAMI

Rise and Defend – The USAF at Manston 1950-1958

BOOK OF THE MONTH

Manston's association with the USAF has its roots firmly in the Cold War. Following its finest hour, the base soon found itself in the front line of the invisible conflict that has made such a fascinating subject for aviation historians. This book does the subject justice.

There is a certain quality to the



colours of some period photography that engenders a deep melancholic nostalgia, and the reader is drawn in to the text by the evocative images. True to form, Flight Recorder provide a fascinating read, in which meticulous detail is tempered by the anecdotal material to which the book owes so much. More of a historian's book than a modeller's, nevertheless the



TECHNICAL DATA

by Duncan Curtis Price: £29.95
Publisher: Flight Recorder ISBN: 0-9545605-5-8
Format: 290 X 210 mm, 192 pages, hardback
Illustrations: Colour and black & white photographs and colour profiles

information and photography covering eight short years is comprehensive in its coverage of all aspects of the operations and aircraft employed.

Ian Worth

SAMI

Luftwaffe Handbook 1935-1945

TECHNICAL DATA

by Gordon Williamson Price: £25
Publisher: Sutton Publishing
ISBN: 0-75094-119-7
Format: 192 x 270 mm, 270 pages, hardback

What do you know about the Luftwaffe? If you are *experten*, then this book will be of no use to you whatsoever, as it is really an overall introduction to a subject that, in depth, requires a whole library. This is more of a browser's guide and would be an ideal accompaniment to a day spent in bed watching The History Channel, as although it is a glossary, it is hefty and well-researched enough to



provide background and clarification on almost any point of interest.

Almost. While details on the aircraft are well catered for there is almost nothing on ground-handling equipment, and where, for instance, it goes to some lengths to provide lists of divisional commanders for *Flak* units, there is no hint as to what sort of prime-movers might be employed for searchlight batteries. This is a large omission in what is an otherwise excellent general reference work.

GH

SAMI

Army Wings – A History of Army Air Observation Flying 1914-60

TECHNICAL DATA

by Robert Jackson Price: £19.99
Publisher: Pen and Sword
ISBN: 1844153800
Format: 256 pages, hardback

This book contains the fascinating story of Army fixed-wing co-operation units who were made up of specially trained volunteer personnel. These men were trained to fly, and reconnoitre across the front line in search of enemy forces and then guide artillery gunners onto the target. From the earliest days of World War I, small low-flying aircraft have flown unarmed into combat situations to relay vital information to aid accurate



shell impact and to advise front-line ground troops of enemy strength and position. They were frequently attacked by fighter aircraft and had to avoid ground-fire, often flying below treetop height. They relied purely on flying skill to outwit the enemy and yet little is known of these unsung heroes of many wars. This book redresses the balance, giving a unique insight into this world, from the battlefields of WWI to the jungles of Vietnam. A worthwhile read for the modeller and enthusiast alike.

GH

SAMI

EE Canberra Part 1: Bomber Canopy Variants in British Service (On Target Profile 7)

TECHNICAL DATA

by Jon Freeman Price: £13.99
 Publisher: Aviation Workshop Publications
 ISBN: 1-904643-25-6
 Illustrations: Colour artwork and photographs, black-and-white line drawings

During its 50+ years' service with the British military the Canberra carried a huge variety of colour schemes and many colourful squadron markings. This book contains 84 profiles and 29 colour photographs, and with the Classic Airframes' 1/48 scale kits now appearing and Airfix's range of Canberra variants in (somewhat distant) prospect, it is a timely release that will inspire many colourful models. The only improvement I would like to have seen would be a selection of 'up close' and 'walk-round' photographs that would have



made this the perfect one-stop reference for anyone modelling the Canberra.

DF

SAMI _____

Swift Justice

TECHNICAL DATA

by Nigel Walpole Price: £25.00
 Publisher: Pen and Sword
 ISBN: 1844150704
 Format: 256 pages, hardback

A superb book on a much-maligned aircraft. The sleek, swept wing Supermarine Swift was rushed into service with the RAF during 1954 to become Britain's first second-generation jet fighter. Sadly, despite its breaking the world air speed record, it was never seen as a success in the fighter role, a reputation it has been burdened with ever since. It found fleeting success as a reconnaissance aircraft, but was eventually replaced by the famous Hawker Hunter and never reached the potential it showed on the drawing board. This excellent book covers the development and operational history of an aircraft that remains a vital part of



aviation legend, and is completed by some superb camouflage plates in the centre section.

AE

SAMI _____

Mark I Guide: Vickers Supermarine Spitfire F. Mk 22/24

TECHNICAL DATA

by Michal Ovcacik and Karel Susa
 Price: £9.90
 Publisher: Mark I in co-operation with 4+
 ISBN: 8-86637-03-4
 Format: 29 pages, softback

Once again 4+ and Co. have come up with the goods. This book is a light, economical but astonishingly in-depth reference tool, with no frills attached, no space-filling lists of uninteresting historical data, and no space wasted whatsoever. Illustrations are a mixture of period shots of the machine in action and marvellous walk-around close-ups of all the bits you really need to see to update your models. There are a few colour profiles and some general layout drawings, all of which are clear and helpful.



In a word, this is the perfect modeller's reference book.

GH

SAMI _____

Aeroguide 32 – Sea Harrier FRS.1 & FA/2

TECHNICAL DATA

by Roger Chesneau Price: £14.95
 Publisher: Ad-Hoc Publications
 ISBN: 0946958440
 Format: 56 pages, softback

As the legendary Sea Harrier has now been retired (prematurely some say) this excellent Ad-Hoc book commemorates the last all British Fighter in all its glory. In their usual A4 style the book provides concise text and detailed pictures of the FRS.1 F/A-2, the Indian Navy FRS.51 and each of the respective two-seat trainers, in a format that is ideal for the modeller. All aspects of the jet are covered, including the overviews of their employment in the Falklands and Bosnia and concludes with the run up to the type's retirement. The undoubted stars in this little gem are the centre spread fold out pages containing 20 colour profiles of schemes worn by the jets and



some 35 line drawings. The Sea Harrier will be sadly missed, but its legacy is well recorded here.

AE

SAMI _____

WEEAC Navigator Range Part 3 – Airfix Seafire FR.46/47

TECHNICAL DATA

Price: £3.50 plus £1.00 post and packing

The latest release in this range of CD-ROMs covers the 1/48 scale Airfix Seafire. The quality of workmanship on the featured model is the best yet and the equal of anything that I have seen on competition tables. As with the previous disc the contents are divided into three chapters which appear as a menu once you insert it into your computer's CD drive.

1. Navigator Construction is the 'how to' part, with a full description of construction of the Seafire illustrated

with 99 photographs. The descriptive text is aided by photographs accessed via clickable links.

2. Navigator Gallery contains 45 photographs of the completed model as a walk-round and this really shows how good the modeller is as all areas of the model are covered. Not something I would like done even to my best model!

3. Navigator Directions, This is my

favourite section as it contains a hints and tips tutorial and is different with each disc. This disc gives a superb

step-by-step guide to using colour washes.

The Airfix Seafire is probably their best kit to date and this disc shows you how to make the most of it. The colour washes section was very informative and I am looking forward to trying this technique on my next model. I can recommend these CDs to

anyone with a computer and I am really looking forward to their next release which will be the first to cover a limited-run kit—Classic Airframes' Meteor. Future releases will cover the Trumpeter Me 262 and Hasegawa/Revell FGR.2 Phantom.

DF

SAMI _____

At present you can only order directly from WEEAC, 13 Island Farm Close, Bridgend, Mid Glamorgan CF31 3LY email: weeac@s129152049 web: weeac.co.uk



Letter of the Month Competition

Revell UK are offering a monthly prize for Readers' Letter of the Month.



Congratulations to this month's winner of the Revell 'Letter of the Month Competition'. Mr Whiting receives a selection of paints from the new Revell Aqua Color range.

Send Your Letters To...

Please send your comments, questions and feedback to the editorial address, clearly marked 'Feedback'.

Readers' Feedback

The views expressed in this column are not necessarily those of SAM Publications. Reader's address details must be supplied but we will only publish them if the letter is considered to be a request for assistance or further correspondence from the readership.

This page will be used to publish letters we receive from the readership that relate to articles previously published in this magazine. These letters will add to, update or revise such articles.



Memories of Croydon days

LETTER OF THE MONTH

I read your article on the Handley Page H.P.42 in the May issue with great interest. I well remember watching these aircraft at Croydon as a child when my father worked at the airport as what was known in those days as a 'ticketed engineer'.

I finished making a model of *Hanno* in 1/48 scale a few months back. For a long time I had wished to make this model, but had been put off the idea by the near impossible task of making the highly complex radial engines. Then Aeroclub produced detailed examples of the Bristol Jupiter, so I could hesitate no longer. Apart from those engines the model is entirely scratchbuilt. The most difficult task was the Warren Truss struts, which were a bit of a nightmare.



None of the real aircraft were exactly the same, and you may notice that I have not included the fuselage radio aerial as the only photo I have of *Hanno* shows it without this. One further point: from my memory of those days at Croydon the H.P.42s' wooden props were either varnished or covered in linen and painted grey.

I would like to mention in passing that I owe a great debt of gratitude to

my friend Alan Clark for the use of his highly detailed H.P.42 drawings.

W R Whiting
Hitchin, Hertfordshire

Superb modelling Mr Whiting. And with respect, I'd venture that, at 82 years of age, you are among SAM's oldest active modeller readers. Long may you continue! Ed.

No end of Rainbows

May I point out a couple of things with regard to your News item about the Anigrand Craftwork kit of the Republic XF-12 Rainbow (SAM, May 2006)? This not the first in 1/72 scale, as I have a vacform kit produced some years ago by Griffin Models of California, which also includes a decal sheet, and one of the things that leaps out at you is that the 'stars 'n' bars' included in the Anigrand kit are approximately 70% undersize, as they have used the same decal sheet as that included with their Convair XB-46 kit, which had narrower, high aspect ratio wings, and hence smaller insignia.

Another thing about the Anigrand kit is that the aerofoil section of the fin and rudder seems to be extremely flat, while the statement in the instruction sheet that the wing leading-edge intake ducts were for planned auxiliary jet engines is



Flying Bedstead

In a recent copy of your magazine interest was expressed in a 1/48 scale model of the Rolls-Royce Thrust Measurement Rig ('Flying Bedstead'). We wondered if you might be interested in the enclosed photo of such a model in our diorama of the Hucknall hardstanding. The model was constructed mainly from scratch but including two Aires RR Nene kits. Owing to the lack of drawings, lost during the 1971 debacle, we were obliged to rely on photos and memories, but we feel we have achieved a very good likeness. The Dakota behind the Bedstead is KJ829 which saw long service at Hucknall on RR Dart development work. As you

would expect, the aircraft in our display are all ones used in development work on various engines at Hucknall between 1935 and 1971 when Flight Development was moved to Filton.

Incidentally we are currently looking for a Westland Wessex in 1/48 scale to add to our display to cover the development work carried out on the Napier Gazelle following Rolls-Royce's assumption of responsibility for that engine. Does anyone know where we might find such a kit to add to the other 16 models, with more on the way hopefully?

I K Purkis
Rolls-Royce Heritage Trust
Hucknall, Nottinghamshire

nonsense. They were solely for providing cooling air to the engines' oil coolers and intercoolers. According to *The Encyclopedia of Military Aircraft Models* a 1/72 scale kit was also produced by Rick's Models of Ohio.

Pete Munro
Dunstable, Bedfordshire

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